/5/

Preliminary Notes

000 1) General necessity for marriage.
2) Necessity for male descendants.

It seems that two remarks are necessary for a good understanding of this study. It is evident that in order to judge a painting, one must not see it at night in the light of a candle, but during the day in the light desired by the artist; one must even be at the right spot to observe what the author wished to put in it; then only will one understand his work.

Now concerning marriage among the T'ou-jen, the ways of thinking of the East and the West differing completely, it is easy not to see the facts in their true light.

The ways and customs of a people find their explanation in its present-day or former ways of thinking and philosophy. Whether this philosophy be good or bad, we do not judge here, but we must see the facts while seeing through ourselves in order to understand them. To observers with different ways of thinking, the same facts may seem rational and honest to some and puerile and full of horror to others.

1. General Necessity for Marriage

581 589 We Europeans do not find it strange to meet people who are not married; we are not surprised to see bachelors in our offices, at our meetings, at our parties; the idea does not occur to us that being unmarried incriminates them; although deep down we feel that this situation is abnormal, we find, outside of religious principles, enough reasons, if not to justify being single, at least to excuse it.

/6/ Now such a point of view does not exist among the T'ou-jen. No T'ou-jen will understand that a man who is not a monk, who is not a lama, is not married unless he is physically incapable of it.

581 589 183 Also among the T'ou-jen it is polite to find out whether all the sons are already married; to satisfy this law of marriage, one will go

581 /6 cont'd/
589 as far as selling all that one possesses, one's lands, houses, and ani-
183 mals, and will live in indigence; at the death of the parents, the elder married sons, in the case where the possessions are about to be divided up, must, before all else, put aside the sums required for the marriage of the younger unmarried sons; the parents, at the approach of death, will feel the greatest relief in the fact that they have gotten all their sons married. In order to permit the poor to marry, recourse is had to all kinds of contrivances, which very often are only imposed by reason of their primordial goal, which is that of marriage, and which scorn many obligations which in "justice" would seem, at the least, to have to be taken into greater consideration. One will find decisions which will appear unjust, but when one studies this mental attitude, which gives proportion to everything, one will understand that among the T'ou-jen the other principles yield to it and are sacrificed.

554 Marriage, for the T'ou-jen people, is the great affair in life,
581 obligatory above all else. One is no longer an honorable man when one is not married; this is because they believe that man has the duty to live according to natural law, that is, to marry and procreate children.

623 One day one of my catechists was invited to sit with the elders
627 of the village to judge the case of a penniless young man who had
689 run off with a girl of good rank. They had been brought back after
588 an escapade of three years, with a child born during the flight.

The young man was on his knees, his hands tied behind his back, imploring the clemency of the judges and of the whole assembled village. /7/ Despairing, he was saying, of ever being able to marry because of his extreme poverty, he had believed it permissible to act in this way, in order to be able to do his duty and marry. "I have been unjust toward the girl's parents, but I submit myself in advance to make all the reparations possible that will be required of me...." The girl also cries for mercy. "I could have hoped for a better match," she admits, "but I followed this young man to be gracious; without me, he would never have been able to marry...."

681 After an important palaver the offending couple was punished, and the judges found a way to indemnify the injured family and to legalize this union.

2: Schram--99 M-4, 5 (1915-1920) 1932 AE9 Monguor AE9 Miao AE5

/86 cont'd/

Mi 582

has the force of law, which requires taking a wife of one's own race.
Savina, Hist. des Miao, p. 284.

/87/ 8. Marriages of Widows as Official Wives

Mo 587 589

Summary. -- 1. Rights of widows, theory and practice. 2. Procedure for the purchase of a widow. 3. Departure of the widow. 4. Settling of accounts. 5. Marriage of widows. 6. Two typical abductions of widows. 7. Vestiges of marriage by abduction among the T'ou-jen.

1. Rights of Widows, Theory and Practice

When parents give a daughter in marriage, they say, "We have taken leave of our daughter," or "We have given our daughter," or even with a slight scorn "We have sold her"; which denotes clearly that a girl's marriage is not her own affair but definitely the business of her parents. On the other hand, when a widow marries, they say, "She has found a man," that is, that she herself has chosen her husband and that she has acted in complete freedom. Besides, the adage says, "Ts'ien kia yeou tié-niang, heou-kia yeou pen-jen," i.e., the first marriage is arranged by the parents, subsequent marriages no longer depend on the parents but on the widow herself.

The terminology used to indicate these two kinds of marriages, as well as this adage, both throw light on the new situation of a woman in widowhood. Everything depends on her; she will remarry or not, and she will choose by herself the husband she wants. At least this is the theory. Yet in practice her right will be respected as long as her owners find no disadvantage in the decision taken by her. It may even happen that she is married off by force by her parents-in-law, and even that she is simply abducted by an unknown man. This is to say that everywhere praxis differt a speculatione /"practice differs from theory"/. But /88/ let us remember this: in case of litigation, everywhere among the T'ou-jen, the rights of the widow

Mo [83]

Mo 587 589 /88 cont'd/ will be invoked, and these rights will form the basis of the discussion.

Therefore after the death of the husband, according to custom Mo [765] the widow will stay in the home of her parents-in-law 49 days. These days are called days of mourning. When this period of time has gone by, she will definitely be able to leave her parents-in-law and go back to her own family. That is her right.

Mo 589 Nevertheless I have known more than one case where young widows did not wait for the 49 days to pass before leaving the parents-in-law; they simply fled. This is because they had wind of the dealings of the parents-in-law, who were getting ready to sell them against their wishes. The right of widows is then a precarious right. Also a widow without sons looks quickly for a match, for she knows well that if she does not look for him herself, her hand will be forced. (1)

Ma 587

1. Shirokogoroff, Social Organization of the Manchus, pp. 70, 71: There are some peculiarities as to the widow's and the widower's marriage. The widow can be remarried according to her personal choice and wish. None of her clan, i.e. her husband's clan, can force her to do it. The late husband's younger brother is always obliged to take care of the widow and his brother's children. The widow has the right to request the separation of her family from the rest of her husband's family and in this case she inherits all the property of her husband. /Cited in English./

Ma 614 589 P. 54: If a widow declares to the Mokunda (the clan chief) that she does not wish to be remarried, but the relatives of her late husband persist on it,

/90 cont'd/

587 [585] girls; they are allowed to leave home only when the very last cash has been paid.

This is because there are so many unforeseen events in this kind of marriage: the widow can deceive the suitor, the parents-in-law can play bad tricks on him, the parents of the widow can do the same, an unknown man can abduct her forcibly at night....Because of these risks the go-betweens do not dare demand payment of the sum before the widow is at her husband's home. A second precaution to take in order to avoid subsequent difficulties consists in the writing of a contract duly signed by the whole family of the parents-in-law, which is scarcely required for the marriage of girls. The marriage contract of a widow is signed only when she has entered the house of her /91/ husband and the money is counted on the table. In the old days, it is said, they used to do without a contract, and they contented themselves with taking the widow's ring, breaking it in two, and giving half to each party.

It is in the evening or at night that they go to get widows, and that is always done without anyone's knowledge. These precautions are needed when one knows the way of thinking of the T'ou-jen, according to which the widow belongs to anyone who can take her. [589] When a widow has made her choice and the negotiations have been begun, she will no longer dare to leave her house; in the evening she will call trusted men, who will mount guard, armed to the teeth. Her parents will be careful to distribute the sa lou ts'ien /"money to block the road"/ to the neighbors: This is the money bestowed on the neighbors so that they will defend the widow in case of an abduction.

3. Departure of the Widow

A band of ten to 20 men armed with swords, sticks, guns... go away in the night and in the greatest silence to get the widow. The greater the danger appears, the larger will be the escort. The widow is at the home of her parents or has gone to some agreed-upon place. The parents will consent to the departure of their

/101 cont'd/

Ma 595 842 sterility. In such case both wives are called "grand wife" in opposition to the concubines called "secret (to be hidden) young wife." /Cited in English./

Mo 595 842 exception.

Therefore in well-off families polygamy will often be seen where there are only one or two daughters; and at the same time one will not always meet two wives in rich families where there are very few children. How can one explain these facts?

Mo 593 171 It is that polygamy among the T'ou-jen remains in practice a very delicate and complex problem. In the family circle the T'ou-jen wife occupies a position much more important than the one which the Chinese wife occupies; in addition T'ou-jen family /102/ life is more intimate than Chinese family life. It proceeds from there that the T'ou-jen wife has more influence on the husband than her Chinese sister has. As schools are rare and intellectual formation among the men is almost nil, the wife will not be inferior to men in that direction. Let us suppose now that she has been able to make herself more or less appreciated by her husband, or let us suppose that having one or two children she is categorically opposed to the introduction of a second wife into the home; or let us suppose that she has won over to her side her /his?/ own parents and that they show themselves displeased with the project; or let us suppose that the wife suggests the word suicide... and then how many suppositions are still possible when one knows that the heart of a jealous woman is an inexhaustible source of expedients... and we shall understand that in practice polygamy bristles with numberless difficulties. As a general rule, if there are no serious motives which enter into it, like sterility or one of the causes explained below: a simple stray impulse, a desire of the lower instinct, even wealthiness, these alone are not enough for practicing polygamy.

Mo 595 589 b) The second category of polygamists: widows, or the levirate.

/102 cont'd/

Mo 595 589 Besides sterility and scarcity of children, which are above all the determining and positive causes of polygamy, there is another cause which is rather passive-negative in the sense that polygamy in this case is rather necessitated by circumstances which do not depend on the wife and is brought on by the situation in which she finds herself. This is the case of the widow upon the decease of the husband among the T'ou-jen.

Mo 587 595 The young widow, who has ordinarily borne several children, finds herself at this moment of her life completely perplexed: to remarry is to run toward the unknown and to abandon her children, who, in her opinion, will be unhappy for the rest of their lives. How can she live without these children? Staying in the family as a widow is advised against for her because of her relative youth... /103/ moreover one of her sons will perhaps be able to marry in two or three years... the position of mother-in-law appeals to her. The family of the parents-in-law understands also what it will lose upon the departure of this fertile woman, and what her children will lose. In this case the mother-in-law, during the 49 days following the death, proposes to the widow that she not leave them and that she marry one of the brothers of the dead man. If there are unmarried sons in the family, a match from among them is proposed to her, the difference in age between husband and wife having little importance in T'ou-jen country. If all the sons are married, she can remarry as the second wife of one of her husband's brothers, little does it matter whether he is older or younger than the dead man.

That is a case of polygamy very common among widows who have children. It is the levirate. Although in theory widows are free to go back to their maternal families after the 49 days of mourning and to marry again at another wedding, they very often remain as the second wife of one of the brothers of the dead husband in order to take care of their children. (1)

Ma 587 595

1. Shirokogoroff, op. cit., p. 64: The widow can marry anyone of her husband's clan members except his

/104 cont'd/

595 587 The T'ou-jen find this kind of polygamy rational when they think of the sad condition in which orphans are put, who, they say, will have to count solely on the grandparents alone, who are already old. I believe that the true explanation of this fact must be found in the former custom which did not permit widows to leave the clan.

Notice with respect to this very special category of polygamists the very special manner in which one speaks of these marriages. One does not say that the widow looked for a husband, as one says in the case of widows who remarry outside the clan of the parents-in-law, but one says sarun xâgu, "to cover the shadow." (2) Is it the

[587 775]

2. It is perhaps useful to note in connection with the expression "to cover the shadow," the way of thinking of the Ou-hoan, Sien-pi peoples (Tong hou peoples) on the subject of the condition of widows in the world beyond. Parker, A Thousand Years of the Tartars, 2nd ed., p. 85: (The widow after being remarried either to her husband's brothers or to his paternal uncles...) "after death reverted to her first husband in the next world." /Cited in English, with introductory part in French./

new husband who covers the shadow of his dead brother, so that this shadow will do no more evil? Among the T'ou-jen the shamans claim that all illnesses are caused by the passage of the shadow of a dead person over the body of a person in good health.

587 589 765 Yet it happens, when widows are no longer young, that they stay in the family of their parents-in-law without remarrying, solely in order to care for their children. When /105/ widows who have not remarried bear another child during the two years following the death of the husband, such a case does not surprise the T'ou-jen too much; the child is supposed to be the child of the dead man. It is

Mo /105 cont'd/
587 then called, if it is a son, either, according to the Chinese custom,
589 Hiao cheng tse, i.e., "/son/ born during the mourning period," or
765 else, according to the T'ou-jen custom, xara khû, i.e., "black
[177] son," which again means "son of mourning" since black is the color
[822] of mourning among the T'ou-jen; they say "to wear black" for "to be in mourning." Black was formerly also the color of mourning among the Mongols. When widows who have not remarried bear
Mo [847 children after two years, it happens that these children are abandoned
848] or that they are drowned right after birth, especially if they are girls. That happens when the family has many children, or when none of
Mo [792] the neighbors wants to feed the poor being. When the newborn is a son, they will keep him, but he will not inherit family property, and as a general rule they will send him at about the age of nine or ten to a lamasery to remain a bachelor. This is the most practical solution for avoiding difficulties in the family later. (1)

Ma [847 848]

1. Shirokogoroff, op. cit. p. 77: The Manchus are very strict in killing illegitimate children, i.e. the children born by unmarried girls and widows.

The other Tungus groups consider girls who have children as the best for marriage, because these girls have the proof of their fecundity. /Cited in English./

Mo 595 c) The third category of polygamists is met in well-to-do families who lack workers.

Mo 461 462 595 We have seen that all the work, so to speak, is assigned to the wife; the household duties, the care of the livestock, and a large part of the work in the fields. A T'ou-jen wife actually kills herself with work. It is painful to us to look at these men with the nomadic instinct, do-nothings, idlers, spare themselves the least fatigue. It can happen, therefore, in families which have much

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583 A. A widow

B. A girl, or the question of husband-sons-in-law

A. Marriage of a Widow

587 One marries a widow without having to pay for her when she is indigent and finds herself after the death of her husband with three or four children; when furthermore she is alone in the world by reason of the fact that she has no brothers-in-law, or if she has, they are too poor to provide for her needs. This is then the case of widows without means of subsistence.

583 /113/ There are naturally few with a taste for this kind of
587 marriage, for those who venture into such will have to raise another person's children, who, sooner or later, if they do not return bad for good, will at least be very little grateful for the care which has been given them. This kind of marriage is literally that called by the Chinese tchao fou iang tse, i.e., "looking for a husband who will feed the children." Although these unions are not advantageous for the husband, nevertheless there are always poor men of some age who, attracted by the hope of offspring, decide to expose themselves to the dangers of such a union, or who rather allow themselves tobe tempted by the widow. Indeed, the terms of this marriage say clearly that it is the widow who is seeking the husband. That says enough,
534 that these unions are not highly prized. In such a marriage, the two
587 parties agree on it first between themselves. Their decision made, they themselves invite a go-between, who will go to see the paternal uncles and the grandparents of the children. The T'ou-jen family has an agnatic base, and the family system is that of the large family
589 with community of property. On the death of the husband, the
421 widow remains therefore within the domain of the community; consequently, it will be necessary to recognize her owners. But since this property is rather a burden for them, it will be easy to come to an agreement. Furthermore, the widow's family knows that if it is not accommodating, the widow will be able to give them a lot of trouble.

/113 cont'd/

587 593 764 The conditions the family lays down are the following: the sons will remain the descendants of the dead man; they will continue to bear his name and will later be buried in their father's cemetery. The new husband will bring them up and feed them. When they reach marriageable age, he will buy them a wife, or he will give the family the required sum ad hoc; then he will be able to send away the married ones, who will provide for their own subsistence. As for the daughters, he will be able to sell them. Since he obligates himself for expenses which so many burdens necessitate, the family does not demand any compensation for the widow.

587 589 578 421 /114/ It often happens that as a consequence of misunderstandings and quarrels, the brothers divide up the property and debts among themselves and form independent families. When a widow of such a family wants to remarry, the family requires the new husband to recognize the debts of the dead man; and the creditors exert pressure on the family to prevent the marriage in case of refusal; but if they are lucky enough to be dealing with a virago who threatens to come with her children and live with them, the difficulties vanish, the debts are put on the children's account and will be demanded later when the children are grown.

587 428 593 In the case where the widow with her children has inherited several plots of land from her dead husband, the new husband will be able to work them to support his family, but he will not be able to sell them since they are the property of the male orphans /sic/. Once they are married, the latter can demand these lands and send their foster father away with their mother, which often happens; if they get along well, they stay together. If, on the other hand, the new husband has lands of his own, and the widow does not, he maintains the family, gets the sons married, and sends them away. If during the marriage the family becomes richer, if the patrimony increases, and children are born of the new marriage, the children of the first husband will receive the share of their dead father plus half of the lands and assets acquired after the second marriage. The personal properties of the new husband are inherited by his own children. If the husband happens to die without leaving children, his personal

/114 cont'd/

Mo 587 428 593 Mo 589 assets and his widow being the property of his own family, they go back into its domain.

These conditions show clearly that the widow is considered to have left the family of her former parents-in-law completely; the latter have given up all the rights they had with respect to her and have entrusted the children to her with the obligation to raise them for their clan.

Mo 584 587 675 When such a marriage is made, a contract is always written in duplicate; /115/ one copy is kept by the husband, and the other is given to the family of the former parents-in-law of the widow. In it minute mention is made of properties, debts, ... and then of the obligations of the new husband.

Mo 582 If they remain poor after the marriage and find it impossible to marry off the sons, when the latter have grown up they end up by going away as they wish.

Mo 587 591 There is no abduction to fear in the present case; the marriage takes place very simply and openly. If the widow has plots of land and the husband does not, he comes to live with her; in the opposite case, the widow with the children moves in with him. If neither one nor the other has anything, they look for a place to stay and go to live together. One prostration to heaven and to the spirits, in the presence of the go-between and the parents, and this is all the ceremony of such marriages; add to it another to the parents and to the go-between. (1)

Mo 428 589 425

1. Shirokogoroff, op. cit.[1], p. 142: If the widow and her daughters do not wish to be cared for by their husband's and father's brothers, they may also receive a part of the property. This part is equal to that of a brother. In this way the woman may become the owner of land and house. But this ownership can be maintained only during two generations (from mother to daughter) because the bride's

[1. op. cit. ie: Social Organisation of the Manchus --- Analyst.]

/148 cont'd/
Mo 586 593 children are accepted in the family to keep the daughter-in-law home better, say the T'ou-jen, and to avoid a second escapade. Then, if later one wants to get rid of them, one will send the boys to the lamasery to devote themselves to the service of Buddha; as for the girls, they will be given in marriage. I confess I have not met polyandry among the T'ou-jen.

Mo 548 Likewise, prostitution in the strict sense of the word is not known. Although there are the series of prayer-post wives and belt wives, they cannot be classed in this category. Indeed, they consider themselves as being married, and they are considered as such, and furthermore they hardly ply the trade of prostitutes. (1)

Ma [548]

1. Shirokogoroff, op. cit., p. 152: Prostitution as a social phenomenon among the Manchus is unknown. /Cited in English./

Mo 589 793 Celibacy is practiced solely by the lamas of the yellow sect, and the T'ou-jen furnish a sizable contingent to this religious body. They are the only bachelors among the T'ou-jen. There is no lamasery for women in the country; all the women without exception Mo [302] practice marriage under one or the other of the forms we have described above. It happens at the very most that one meets widows or women of advanced age who shave their heads and devote themselves especially to prayer while staying at home.

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Chapter VI

The Matriarchate

006 Summary: -- A. Present-day patriarchal state. System of the large family. B. Former matriarchate proved by: (1) Double burial. (2) The relations of the maternal uncle with the family of his sister

[638 cont.]

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[171]

[Note on foreign text p. 654 cont.] on the oil. This is to prevent the wick from burning too far down into the bowl; in order to save oil, the lower half is filled with water. -- The Chinese dough-lamp of long life, ch'ang-ming teng, has nothing to do with this lamp; it is unknown to the Tujen.

the deceased's own family must present these gifts. A so-called paper-bowl also stands on the floor next to the bread and the water-lamp. After each meal some tea, soup, or milk is poured into it, and little pieces of meat, bread, vegetable, etc. [264] are thrown in, according to what the family has just eaten. Until the day of cremation the dead is always supposed to partake of the meals of the household. The paper-bowl is an ordinary earthen bowl; it gets its name from the fact that after the paper-burning the charred leaves are thrown in it (11). Along with the

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11. [Foreign text p. 654.] The paper-burning is typically Chinese.

water-lamp it is emptied in front of the gate on the last day, when the death-box leaves the compound for cremation. It is not broken, but may be used again for other purposes.

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On the third day after the death, the oldest married daughter of the household appears with 12 loaves of bread. Then the family loaves before the death-box are replaced by the daughter's loaves. This is called "bread exchange." This takes place each time a person makes an offering of loaves. The oldest daughter is followed in order by the younger ones, whether or not the corpse has already been put in the box. Unmarried [589] daughters of the household do not make offerings. Every time [152] someone offers loaves, he also burns white paper and weeps aloud; the men, it is true, do not weep (24).

[207 cont.]

775 the Tujen. For instance, one hears little about a Buddhist hell,
171 which plays a much more important role among the neighboring Chinese and is quite graphically portrayed in many temples. It is true that the Tujen like to consider the misfortune in this world as punishment for earlier transgressions. This soul, which
775 one could call "incarnation soul" or "private soul" -- in con-
764 trast to the clan soul -- becomes free for the incarnation through the transforming lotus fire at the cremation. The informant, at any rate, interpreted the lotus-mandala and the fire at the cremation in this sense and ascribed to them a transforming power. This does not mean that this soul remains in the body as long as, say, in an animated corpse. Rather, at the death of the person, the lamas are supposed "to open the way" through prayer, so that the soul may reach Tushita. To what extent such explana-
[171] tions correspond with the orthodox Buddhist doctrine will be left undecided. Any any rate, the conceptions of the people are vague.

775 Even more unclear are the conceptions about the third
776 soul, which is supposed to transform itself into a demon. Nothing is known about its fate and about the cause of such a transformation. Such a soul is feared, however. Perhaps it is this soul that in case of dissatisfaction after the bäda disturbs the
[764] human beings at the command of the clan soul, haunts the
[782] house and yard, and causes sickness and misfortune. At any rate, a great part of the offerings and prayers at the death rites is given out of fear of this soul. The constantly expressed wish to the dead person runs: "Forget us, be content, do not come
775 back." A natural discontent and a kind of missing of life's goal
776 are connected with the soul of unmarried adult girls. It be-
589 comes a demon who is so dangerous that even other demons flee
[765] from it, for which reason the Bon priests take the material for their bone flutes, their whip, etc. from the corpses of such girls. The discontent and non-fulfillment can only be accounted for in this case by the unmarried state, which, according to Tujen conceptions, goes against every natural ordinance for a female person. One may suspect that this soul-belief also has a strong
[588] effect on the custom that the Tujen call "to arrange the heavenly

[207 cont.]
hairdress," through which a girl is wedded to heaven and is no longer burdened with the contempt suffered by unmarried women (see above). The fear of the female demon-souls [208] is also widespread among the Chinese, and there is only one way of being safe from them: the cremation. In the customs of the Tsinghai Chinese, this fear and contempt have their basis in the Buddhist conception that a woman is an unclean being and that this uncleanness is only removed through the man and his descendants. This attitude is strengthened through the fervent desire for sons and grandsons, which again is connected with the ancestor cult. These Buddhistic motives are certainly also decisive in part among the Tujen. Among them, too, the woman is regarded as unclean, even if not so harshly as among the Chinese. The veneration of the ancestors plays scarcely any role. Nonetheless, uncleanness and demonism are closely connected. A very common expression runs: pudaǧ ilie, unclean demon; a woman is also pudaǧ during her period.

The demon soul therefore seems to stand in a special relationship with the female principle. This suggests the surmise that it represents the flesh-(body)-soul in the human being, which stands in contrast to the bone-soul. In northeastern Tibet and elsewhere one encounters the conception that the bones of a person come from the man and the flesh from the woman. Among the Tujeh, however, this relationship is difficult to determine because it is precisely the bone-soul that is related so closely to the mother's clan. This does not, it is true, exclude an individual assignment to the man (father), but it does not permit it to make its appearance through this unquestionably matriarchal trait.

From everything, one can see that the Tujen are little concerned about the after-life of the soul and the beyond. To them it is enough if they are left in peace on earth. The Buddhist conceptions are more theoretical. In actuality one not infrequently encounters a this-worldly fatalism which expresses itself in the saying: "Our life does not have much meaning" (literally: we have lived in vain). Even if the conception of the soul has much similarity to that of the Chinese, the Tujen